

APPENDIX 3.7.6.

GUIDELINES FOR THE KILLING OF ANIMALS FOR DISEASE CONTROL PURPOSES

Article 3.7.6.1.

General principles

~~This Appendix is~~ These guidelines are based on the premise that a decision to kill the animals has been made, and address the need to ensure the welfare of the animals until they are dead.

1. All personnel involved in the humane killing of animals should have the relevant skills and competencies. Competence may be gained through formal training and/or practical experience. This competence should be demonstrated through a current certificate from an independent body accredited by a Competent Authority.
2. As necessary, operational procedures should be adapted to the specific circumstances operating on the premises and should address, apart from animal welfare, aesthetics of the method of euthanasia, cost of the method, operator safety, biosecurity and environmental aspects.
3. Following the decision to kill the animals, killing should be carried out as quickly as possible and normal husbandry should be maintained until the animals are killed.
4. The handling and movement of animals should be minimised and when done, it should be done in accordance with the guidelines described below.
5. Animal restraint should be sufficient to facilitate effective killing, and in accordance with animal welfare and operator safety requirements; when restraint is required, killing should follow with minimal delay.
6. When animals are killed for disease control purposes, methods used should result in immediate death or immediate loss of consciousness lasting until death; when loss of consciousness is not immediate, induction of unconsciousness should be non-aversive and should not cause anxiety, pain, distress or suffering in the animals.
7. For animal welfare considerations, young animals should be killed before older animals; for biosecurity considerations, infected animals should be killed first, followed by in-contact animals, and then the remaining animals.
8. There should be continuous monitoring of the procedures by the Competent Authorities to ensure they are consistently effective with regard to animal welfare, operator safety and biosecurity.

9. When the operational procedures are concluded, there should be a written report describing the practices adopted and their effect on animal welfare, operator safety and biosecurity.
10. ~~To the extent possible to minimise public distress, killing of animals and carcass disposal should be carried out away from public view.~~
11. These general principles should also apply when animals need to be killed for other purposes such as after natural disasters or for culling animal populations.

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Article 3.7.6.3.

Responsibilities and competencies of the specialist team

1. Team leader

a) Responsibilities

- i) plan overall operations on an affected premises;
- ii) determine and address requirements for animal welfare, operator safety and biosecurity;
- iii) organise, brief and manage team of people to facilitate humane killing of the relevant animals on the premises in accordance with national regulations and these guidelines;
- iv) determine logistics required;
- v) monitor operations to ensure animal welfare, operator safety and biosecurity requirements are met;
- vi) report upwards on progress and problems;
- vii) provide a written report at the conclusion of the killing, describing the practices adopted and their effect on the animal welfare, operator safety and biosecurity outcomes.

b) Competencies

- i) appreciation of normal animal husbandry practices;
- ii) appreciation of animal welfare and the underpinning behavioural, anatomical and physiological processes involved in the killing process;
- iii) skills to manage all activities on premises and deliver outcomes on time;

- iv) awareness of psychological effects on farmer, team members and general public;
- v) effective communication skills;
- vi) appreciation of the environmental impacts caused by their operation.

2. Veterinarian

a) Responsibilities

- i) determine and implement the most appropriate killing method to ensure that animals are killed without avoidable pain and distress;
- ii) determine and implement the additional requirements for animal welfare, including the order of killing;
- iii) ensure that confirmation of animals deaths is carried out by competent persons at appropriate times after the killing procedure;
- iv) minimise the risk of disease spread within and from the premises through the supervision of biosecurity procedures;
- v) continuously monitor animal welfare and biosecurity procedures;
- vi) in cooperation with the leader, prepare a written report at the conclusion of the killing, describing the practices adopted and their effect on animal welfare.

b) Competencies

- i) ability to assess animal welfare, especially the effectiveness of stunning and killing, and to correct any deficiencies;
- ii) ability to assess biosecurity risks.

3. Animal handlers

a) Responsibilities

- i) review on-site facilities in terms of their appropriateness;
- ii) design and construct temporary animal handling facilities, when required;
- iii) move and restrain animals;
- iv) continuously monitor animal welfare and biosecurity procedures.

b) Competencies

- i) ~~An experience of~~ Animal handling in emergency situations and in close confinement is required;
- ii) an appreciation of biosecurity and containment principles.

4. Slaughterers Animal killing personnel

a) Responsibilities

Humane killing of the animals through effective stunning and killing should be ensured.

b) Competencies

- i) when required by regulations, licensed to use necessary equipment ~~or licensed to be slaughterers~~;
- ii) competent to use and maintain relevant equipment;
- iii) competent to use techniques for the species involved;
- iv) competent to assess effective stunning and killing.

5. Carcass disposal personnel

a) Responsibilities

An efficient carcass disposal (to ensure killing operations are not hindered) should be ensured.

b) Competencies

The personnel should be competent to use and maintain available equipment and apply techniques for the species involved.

6. Farmer/owner/manager

a) Responsibilities

- i) assist when requested.

b) Competencies

- i) specific knowledge of his/her animals and their environment.

Article 3.7.6.4.

Considerations in planning the humane killing of animals

Many activities will need to be conducted on affected premises, including the humane killing of animals. The team leader should develop a plan for humanely killing animals on the premises which should include consideration of:

1. minimising handling and movement of animals;
2. killing the animals on the affected premises; however, there may be circumstances where the animals may need to be moved to another location for killing; when the killing is conducted at an abattoir, the guidelines in the Chapter on slaughter of animal for human consumption should be followed;
3. the species, number, age and size of animals to be killed, and the order of killing them;
4. methods of killing the animals, and their cost;
5. housing, husbandry and location of the animals;
6. the availability and effectiveness of equipment needed for killing of the animals;
7. the facilities available on the premises that will assist with the killing including any additional facilities that may need to be brought on and then removed from the premises;
8. biosecurity and environmental issues;
9. the health and safety of personnel conducting the killing;
10. any legal issues that may be involved, for example where restricted veterinary drugs or poisons may be used, or where the process may impact on the environment; and
11. the presence of other nearby premises holding animals.

In designing a killing plan, it is essential that the method chosen be consistently reliable to ensure that all animals are humanely and quickly killed.

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